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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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EXAMINER

HILLERY, NATHAN

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2176

DATE MAILED: 09/23/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/872,515

Applicant(s)

OTTER ET AL.

Examiner

Nathan Hillery

Art Unit

2176

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 30 September 2002.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-15 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-15 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 01 June 2001 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) ✓
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 9/9/02; 9/18/01 ✓
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

1. This action is responsive to communications: IDS filed on 9/30/02.
2. Claims 1 – 15 are pending in the case. Claims 1, 8, and 10 are independent.

Specification

3. Applicant is reminded of the proper content of an abstract of the disclosure.

A patent abstract is a concise statement of the technical disclosure of the patent and should include that which is new in the art to which the invention pertains. If the patent is of a basic nature, the entire technical disclosure may be new in the art, and the abstract should be directed to the entire disclosure. If the patent is in the nature of an improvement in an old apparatus, process, product, or composition, the abstract should include the technical disclosure of the improvement. In certain patents, particularly those for compounds and compositions, wherein the process for making and/or the use thereof are not obvious, the abstract should set forth a process for making and/or use thereof. If the new technical disclosure involves modifications or alternatives, the abstract should mention by way of example the preferred modification or alternative.

The abstract should not refer to purported merits or speculative applications of the invention and should not compare the invention with the prior art.

Where applicable, the abstract should include the following:

- (1) if a machine or apparatus, its organization and operation;
- (2) if an article, its method of making;
- (3) if a chemical compound, its identity and use;
- (4) if a mixture, its ingredients;
- (5) if a process, the steps.

Extensive mechanical and design details of apparatus should not be given.

4. The abstract of the disclosure is objected to because purported merits and/or speculative application. Further, the abstract appears to be a direct translation from another language. Correction is required. See MPEP § 608.01(b).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

Art Unit: 2176

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. Claims 1 – 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Turpin et al. (US 5745712 A).

7. **Regarding independent claim 1**, Turpin et al. teach that *in a preferred embodiment, value trees select a conclusion based on the first condition that is satisfied (although this preference may be modified to suit the needs a particular embodiment). For simplicity to the user, however, the conditions are typically positioned in the order that they should be evaluated. In the preceding example, for instance, the condition >20 should be the first condition in the value tree (Column 24, lines 9 – 17) as illustrated in Figs 36A-B, which provide for **providing a logic view with nodes to represent the layout items, the logic view (b) to visualize a processing order of the layout items by the position of the nodes**, that as shown in FIG. 37D, the value tree now shows a branch 631, but no condition or conclusion. A dotted rectangle surrounds the conclusion node, showing that it is selected (Column 24, lines 59 – 61), which provide for the capability **(c) to visualize at least one of the nodes as a selected node to represent a selected layout item**; that thus, the properties of objects may be visually manipulated. Properties are also conveniently inspected. Properties of a field can be inspected, for instance, by clicking on it with the right mouse button (Column 22, lines 31 – 34), which provide for **providing a property view to display properties of the selected layout item**; that FIG. 15 illustrates the ability of the system of the invention to highlight the selected path in a tree for the user (Column 17, lines 1 – 2), which provide*

for **providing a layout view to display the layout items, wherein the selected layout item is highlighted**; that *in the Form Tool, lets the user select multiple objects in order to perform editing operations, assign or revise properties, or reposition the selected fields as a group of objects* (Column 6, lines 38 – 41), which provide for **modifying the selected layout item and the processing order through interaction with a user**; **and** that *FIG. 4 represents the major divisions of the "form image data file" which is generated during form creation..* (Column 12, lines 63 – 64), which provide for **creating a form definition document**. Turpin et al. do not explicitly teach **visualizing structure information of the form**; however, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the invention of Turpin et al. to provide the capability **(a) to visualize structure information of the form**, since Turpin et al. do teach *the Definition of decision tree structures comprising branches and conclusions which are assigned to the fields of the forms which comprise a related stack of forms* (Column 12, lines 28 – 31), it would be advantageous for advanced users of the invention of Turpin et al. to be able see and/or visualize the structure in order to help them better understand the form they are creating.

8. **Regarding dependent claims 2 and 3**, Turpin et al. teach that *both trees are made of nodes. There are branch nodes (restricted and unrestricted) and conclusion nodes. A restricted branch is simply a branch that is associated with a field; an unrestricted branch is not limited to values in a field. An empty node serves as a placeholder, indicating the absence of a tree or the lack of a conclusion after a branch. Every node has a condition except the root branch (the first branch). In a preferred*

Art Unit: 2176

embodiment, a decision is made by reading trees from top to bottom and left to right.

Thus, trees are read in much the same way one would read a flow chart: Is Quantity

(branch) greater than 25 (condition)? If the answer is yes, then Shipping Method is

Commercial carrier. If the answer is no, then evaluate the next condition (Column 22,

*lines 44 – 56), which provide that **the logic view is provided as a tree view and the***

nodes are tree nodes so that the processing order is visualized by a root node, a

plurality of branch nodes, and a plurality of leave nodes (conclusion nodes), and

that the plurality of branch nodes comprise condition nodes to process layout

items depending on logical statements in the nodes.

9. **Regarding dependent claim 4**, Turpin et al. teach that *in the Form Tool, lets the*

user select multiple objects in order to perform editing operations, assign or revise

properties, or reposition the selected fields as a group of objects (Column 6, lines 38 –

*41), which provide for **wherein modifying the processing order through interaction***

comprises to change the position of the tree nodes.

10. **Regarding dependent claim 5**, Turpin et al. teach that *notwithstanding,*

disclosure of the invention in this particular environment, the principles of the invention

can be implemented as a program which includes an integral interface facility; or in the

context of other interface environments (Column 11, lines 18 – 22), which provide that

the steps providing logic view, providing property view and providing layout view

are performed for a graphical user interface on a single screen.

11. **Regarding dependent claim 6**, Turpin et al. teach that *in accordance with the*

invention, keyboard entries are checked against "field characteristics" which are

assigned to a field during form creation. If a keyboard entry for a field is not consistent with the assigned characteristic, the entered value is rejected and an error message advises the operator of a problem. Such characteristics can be assigned to a field by standard "picture" specifications. Alternatively, requirements for the form of a field input can be established by local form rules which are implemented by decision trees attached to the field. As an option, upon the occurrence of an error in input format, the field in error can be cleared and the prompt returned to that field to continue form completion (Column 4, lines 30 – 41), which provide that the **step modifying comprises to verify the compatibility of layout items and processing order with a predefined data interface of the business application.**

12. **Regarding dependent claim 7**, Turpin et al. teach that *an event tree for a form can initiate actions when a form is opened or closed. For example, a form event tree could have Close as a condition, and @PRINTFORM(FormName) as the conclusion. Every time a user closes that form, it would be printed. A form event tree could have Open as a condition, and @FIELDFIND(FieldName) as a conclusion. In this instance, every time a user opens that form, the specified field would be selected* (Column 29, lines 47 – 54), which provide for **further comprising to generate a form printing program from the form definition document, the form printing program being called by the business application to print a final document.**

13. **Regarding independent claim 8**, the claim incorporates substantially similar subject matter as claims 1 – 4, and is rejected along the same rationale.

14. **Regarding dependent claim 9**, the claim incorporates substantially similar subject matter as claim 6, and is rejected along the same rationale.
15. **Regarding independent claim 10**, the claim incorporates substantially similar subject matter as claim 1, and is rejected along the same rationale.
16. **Regarding dependent claim 11**, the claim incorporates substantially similar subject matter as claim 2, and is rejected along the same rationale.
17. **Regarding dependent claim 12**, the claim incorporates substantially similar subject matter as claim 3, and is rejected along the same rationale.
18. **Regarding dependent claim 13**, the claim incorporates substantially similar subject matter as claim 4, and is rejected along the same rationale.
19. **Regarding dependent claim 14**, the claim incorporates substantially similar subject matter as claim 5, and is rejected along the same rationale.
20. **Regarding dependent claim 15**, the claim incorporates substantially similar subject matter as claim 6, and is rejected along the same rationale.

Conclusion


Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Nathan Hillery whose telephone number is (703) 305-4502. The examiner can normally be reached on M - F, 6:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m..

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Joseph H. Feild can be reached on (703) 305-9792. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Art Unit: 2176

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

NH



JOSEPH FEILD
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER